(b) Out of 7230 complaints, 1348 complaints were settled and 5882 complaints, which have been taken up with the concerned companies / Registrar of Companies, are yet to be settled.

(c) The Investors Protection Cell primarily deals with complaints relating to non-receipt of shares / debenture certificates after allotment / transfer, refund of share / debenture application money, non-receipt of dividend / interest warrants and non-payment of dividend etc. All such complaints are acknowledged and taken up with the concerned companies for prompt redressal.

However, in case of listed public companies and those public companies which intend to get their securities listed on any recognised Stock Exchanges in India, powers have been vested with Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), with effect from 13.12.2000, under section 55A of the Companies Act.

Powers to Lok Adalats

402. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to give more powers to Lok Adalats in view of their better performance in the past;

(b) if so, whether Government are proposing to introduce a Bill to enlarge the Lok Adalats;

(c) if so, the details of the same;

(d) the total number of Lok Adalats to be set up in each State;

(e) the power to be provided to them; and

(f) to what extent it will reduce the cases pending with the various courts in the country?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. At present, the Lok Adalats can settle disputes only on the basis of compromise or settlement among the parties. If the parties do not arrive at a settlement, the case is either returned to the court of law or the parties are advised to seek remedy in a court of law. To remove this drawback, it has been decided to add a new Chapter in the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, which will facilitate setting up of permanent Lok Adalats

for providing compulsory pre-litigative mechanism for conciliation and settlement of cases relating to public utility services.

(d) The National Legal Services Authority or the State Legal Services Authority, as the case may be, may establish permanent Lok Adalat at such places and in such numbers as may be expedient to enable the Lok Adalats to exercise its jurisdiction in respect of one or more public utility services as necessary from time to time.

(e) The permanent Lok Adalats would have jurisdiction regarding public utility services such as transport (air, road, water), postal, telegraph or telephone, power, water, sanitation, hospitals and insurance. To avoid prolonged litigation it has also been proposed that the award made by the Lok Adalat shall be final, binding and shall not be questioned in any original suit, application or execution proceeding. The jurisdiction of the Lok Adalats would, however, be limited to cases upto a monetary value of Rs. 10 lakhs.

(f) It is not possible to quantify the reduction in the Court cases at present.

Mahila Courts

403. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether justice still eludes women who are victims of atrocities like dowry harassment, molestation and rape;

(b) if so, whether Government had set up "Mahila Courts" to specially deal with such cases;

(c) whether the conviction rate in very poor and the number of atrocity cases being registered are spiralling every year;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor indicating the number of cases pending as on 31st January, 2002, Statewise; and

(e) the steps Government propose to take to expedite the disposal of cases of atrocities against women?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.